

Videogame Shakespeare: Enskilling Audiences through Theater-Making Games

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SINCE 2008, WHEN MICHAEL BEST surveyed the field of Shakespeare video games and reported just a handful of fairly unsuccessful experiments at the border between Shakespeare education and gaming entertainment, the field of Shakespeare gaming has exploded.¹ There are currently dozens of video as well as board and card games about Shakespeare's life, drama, and theatrical culture. Although very few scholars have paid much attention to them, they are worth closer analysis not only for scholars of adaptation studies and popular culture, but also for scholars of drama, theater history, and performance.² To be sure, most games simply trade on the bard's cultural iconicity, using theater to sell games (or products advertised on free gaming Web sites), but increasingly theater proponents have reversed this strategy, using games to sell theater. In addition to the many commercial games available for personal computers, smartphones, and iPads, games have emerged on the Web sites of esteemed heritage institutions for Shakespeare, including the Stratford Shakespeare Festival in Ontario and Shakespeare's Globe theater in London.³

Whether driven by financial profits or a mission to keep the classics alive (or both), Shakespeare-themed games aspire to have cultural impact and arguably have a good chance of doing so. As they expose a broader public to Shakespeare theater, they hold out the hope of luring a younger, hipper set into patronizing the theater arts by making uninitiated audiences more comfortable with Shakespeare's plays and theatrical performance in general. But what can games do for Shakespearean theater that it cannot do for itself? Insofar as many Shakespeare consumers tend to think of the

plays as hallowed artistic objects to be watched quietly and respectfully, theater-themed games can leverage the interactivity of gaming to draw out the interactive qualities of Shakespeare's plays. They can turn Shakespearean theater into (or reveal that it already is) a game audiences might play. Surprisingly, few games actually manage this feat, however, and my essay explores why certain games struggle more than others to translate the phenomenology of theater into gaming.

I focus on a genre of theater-themed games that ought to be well poised to simulate and express the interactivity of theatrical performance: games that turn their players into creators of theater (actors, dramatists, theater managers, or designers). What I term *theater-making games* can be distinguished from what can be called *drama-making games*, in which the player essentially inhabits or controls a Shakespearean character; in drama-making games, the gamer does not impersonate the character in the guise of an actor, but rather becomes the character usually to change its outcome in a dramatic plot.⁴ We can also distinguish theater-making games from another, even more prolific subset of Shakespeare games I would describe as *scholar-making games*, which center on trivia, turning the player into a student of Shakespeare and his theater.⁵ Unlike scholar- or drama-making games, in which players for the most part consume someone else's fiction or historical data, theater-making games invite players to feel for themselves what it is like to put on a play, in all its diverse facets.

Despite their promise, theater-making games struggle to enskill successfully their users in the experience of theater, and I argue that this is because of an incompatibility between the bodily mechanics of theater-making the games represent and their own game-play mechanics, which call for largely untheatrical gestures such as pushing buttons, flipping cards, moving counters, and so forth. I suggest, however, that the presumably distinct physical experiences of theater-making and game play can productively be brought to bear on each other if game designers take advantage of new technologies in immersive gaming. As a case in point, I'll conclude by discussing a Shakespeare videogame that I am currently helping to design with colleagues at the University of California, Davis. Using a Kinect camera, the game engages players' bodies in a simulation of theatrical production, cognitively and physically immersing them in many of the performance actions thematized within the game's narrative. The game teaches users theatrical com-

petencies by offering them the chance to feel the action of theater-making at both cognitive and physical levels. At the same time as it develops spectator skills, this sort of playing amounts to real theatrical work. Drawing on Ian Bogost's discussion of "performative mechanics" in videogames—wherein actions performed as part of a game affect simultaneously the world within and the world outside it—I maintain that in the process of simulating theater-making, players become creators of the Shakespearean "work."⁶

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Whether explicitly or implicitly pedagogical, theater-making games hold great potential for teaching users about Shakespeare in performance. For instance, in Richard Heffner and Mike Siggins' *Shakespeare: The Bard Game* (a board game by Überplay, 2004) and Shakespeare's Globe theater online game *Hemmings' Play Company*, players pretend to be Elizabethan theater managers working to stage commercially viable plays in the face of numerous vagaries of performance—lost props, sick actors, mercurial audience members, and so forth. As players weigh the benefits of investing in props vs. actors or discover the havoc the plague could inflict on profits, players can experience the trials and tribulations of running a theater company and staging an Elizabethan play. Other theater-making games offer players the chance to inhabit the roles of stage designer, wardrobe manager, or dramatist. For instance, the player of the iPad app *iInsultThee* generates Shakespearean barbs worthy of the bard, such as "Thou clouted folly-fallen maggot pie" or "Thou artless urchin-snouted fustilarian"—creative genius with the touch of a button. More complex is the dramatist role in *The Playwright Game*, a Web-based choose-your-own-adventure by PBS, where the user takes on the persona of an aspiring playwright who must make tough decisions about what plot to pursue for his/her next drama.⁷ Choose correctly, and the player becomes the famous Bard of Stratford; choose wrong, and the player may return to a former life of shoveling dung, because apparently writing "flops" like *Dido, Queen of Carthage* does nothing for one's career.

Setting aside their obvious bardolatrous ideologies, the games have pedagogical value insofar as they familiarize their users with various aspects involved in the process of making theater such that when game players attend an actual Shakespeare performance, they would arguably be more critically and emotionally engaged in what they see. As scholars in the field of educational gaming have

shown, games are especially successful in enskilling players because of their immersive and interactive qualities—they offer opportunities to practice certain actions in a protected, curated space.⁸ However, the physical mechanics of most games, I would argue, limit their pedagogical potential by keeping just out of reach the *phenomenological* experience of theater-making. In these games, embodied game actions (pushing buttons, clicking the mouse, flipping a card, moving a counter) abstractly represent the embodied gestures of producing theater but do not come close to mimicking it. For instance, players of *The Bard Game* produce a “play” by gathering props, scripts, and actors from different spaces on the board where these components can be purchased (a nobleman’s country house for patrons, a tavern for actors, a marketplace for props). [See image 1.] Although the game immerses the player in an historically accurate story about managing an Elizabethan theater company, this immersion works solely at the level of narrative representation, for the gamic gesture of moving one’s counter from one space to another conveys the sense that putting on a play was and is primarily a challenge of geographical mobility. Neither theater historians nor phenomenological accounts of theater-making would support that conclusion, of course.

Tensions between the physical gestures of theater-making and game-playing are especially evident in a game like *Design a Postcard* (Shakespeare’s Globe). In this art-based game users create visual scenes, adding actors and props to a postcard background of their choice—a scaled down version of the performing object theater games popular in the Victorian era and revived recently in the iPad app *Pollock’s Toy Theatre*.⁹ Insofar as some postcards depict models of London’s reconstructed Globe theater stage, the game exposes players to theatrical objects and scenery associated with historical and contemporary Shakespeare performance, encouraging young players to feel like set designers and partially even like directors. The mechanics of the game, however, create a very different feeling, more akin to working with Adobe Acrobat or other editing software. Once players choose a prop, for example, they use various tools to change its scale, position, and orientation. In terms of its ludic action, *Design Postcards* is largely dependent on very untheatrical computer skills, on players knowing how to point, click, and manipulate the right digital-editing tools.

It is partly because the mechanics of gaming in most machine-based play are so untheatrical that the theater-making games per-

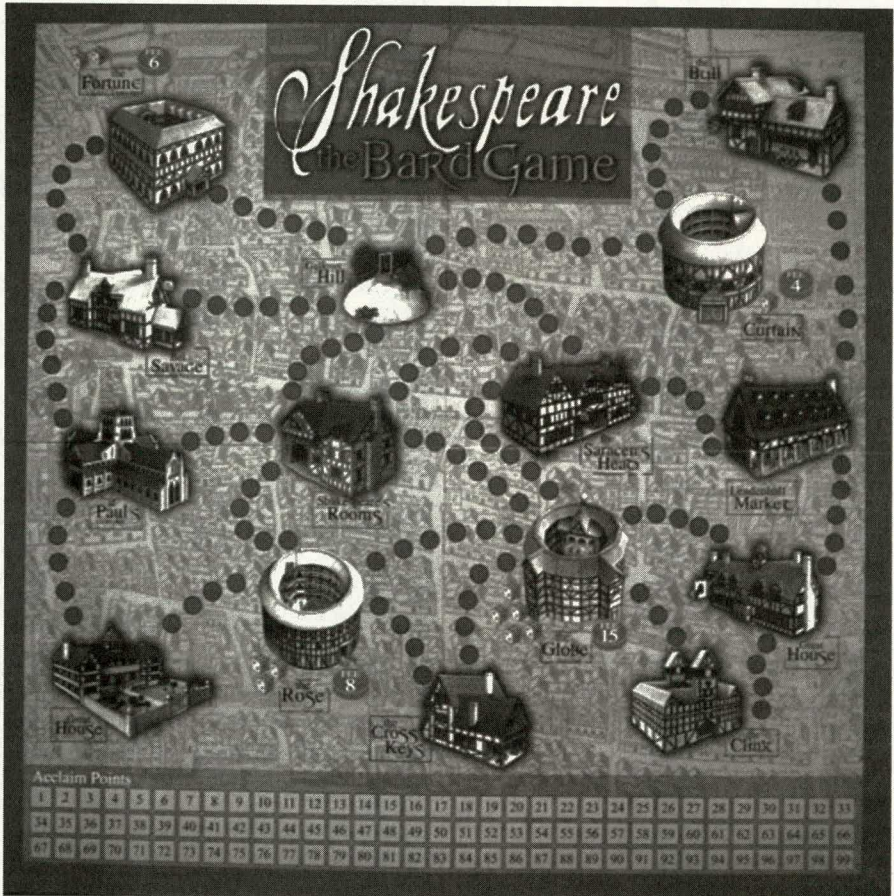


Image 1: The board for *Shakespeare: The Bard Game* (Überplay, 2004). Photograph by the author.

haps best able to teach theatergoing competencies are storytelling role-play games (RPGs). For instance, in Brian Paul and Danielle Rosvally's *Revenge of the Groundlings*—one of several dozen games created for Game Chef, a game-design competition whose 2011 theme was Shakespeare—players take on the role of would-be actors and dramatists, creating a play inspired by Shakespeare's characters and genres.¹⁰ Players choose a genre card (comedy, tragedy, or history), which determines their character's motives (e.g., in comedy, the character scale moves between malice and love). And they choose from a list of archetypal Shakespeare characters (e.g., lover, reluctant ruler, clown) as well as various plot elements,

such as ghosts, madness, and misdirected letters. Recognizing the impact of audiences, the game requires player-actors to expend “stage presence” points, a limited resource, when they “enter” a scene to have their character take part in it. The only moments of actual theatrical performance in *Revenge of the Groundlings* come at the end of each round or “act,” when the winning player gives a soliloquy to the group. Nevertheless, its players come to learn a little something about Shakespeare performance during the course of play as they participate in the collaborative production of a script.

In their integration of embodied role play to teach theatrical competencies, storytelling RPGs support my sense that theater-themed games are more pedagogically effective—at least in terms of theatrical enskillment—when their materials of play closely resemble materials used in theater production. In this case the game, like theater, is made through speaking and, in the best of playing scenarios, gesturing bodies. But is it possible to create a similar experience of theater making through machine-based play? Ten or even five years ago, I think the answer to this question might have been “no.” However, recent innovations in gaming technology have made it possible to bring into closer alignment the physical gestures of machine-based play and of theater making. I am referring to the new generation of immersive gaming platforms like Wii but especially Kinect for Windows and Xbox, in which players control their on-screen 3D avatars through use of their own bodies. If the user wishes for her avatar to wave a hand in the air, the user simply produces the gesture. The user’s skeletal data is captured by the Kinect camera and mapped onto the 3D avatar, which appears to reflect back the gesture in what feels to the player like real time. Theatrical paradigms (probably unwittingly) inform this technology of animation, and I would suggest that such technologies hold out revolutionary possibilities for bringing the experience of theatergoing and theater making to people who might never otherwise set foot in a theater, particularly not a Shakespeare one, or at least who don’t get all that excited when they do.

At the University of California, Davis’s ModLab, we are experimenting with these possibilities through the development of a Shakespeare videogame called *Play the Knave*. A Kinect-enabled game for Windows, *Play the Knave* offers users an immersive, embodied experience of staging a scene from a Shakespeare play. Users begin to craft their production of the scene by choosing set design (historical or fantastical), music, lighting, costumes/actors

and theater space (e.g., a proscenium or a thrust stage). Once these choices are selected, the screen shows a three-dimensional image of the theater stage the players have chosen, all done up to convey the selected setting, and each player's avatar (i.e., the costumed actor) appears on the stage ready to perform. Shakespeare's script lines scroll at the bottom of the screen, and in a kind of theater karaoke, the players perform, their gestures and voices mapped onto their avatars. The effect is that of seeing one's performance mirrored "live" on screen. [See image 2.] The game-play session is recorded and at its close, players can choose any seat in the theater from which to view the performance. The recorded scene can then be shared with a chosen viewer (such as a teacher or friend) or on public sharing sites like Facebook and YouTube, the latter having become a dominant medium for the production, reception, and teaching of Shakespeare in the twenty-first century.¹¹ Users might then mash up scenes created by other users. Ultimately, users will be able perform remotely, their avatars sharing a digital stage with the avatars of friends or strangers anywhere in the world. They will also be able to import their own assets (stages, design features, music) and, using the Folger's open-source online Shakespeare

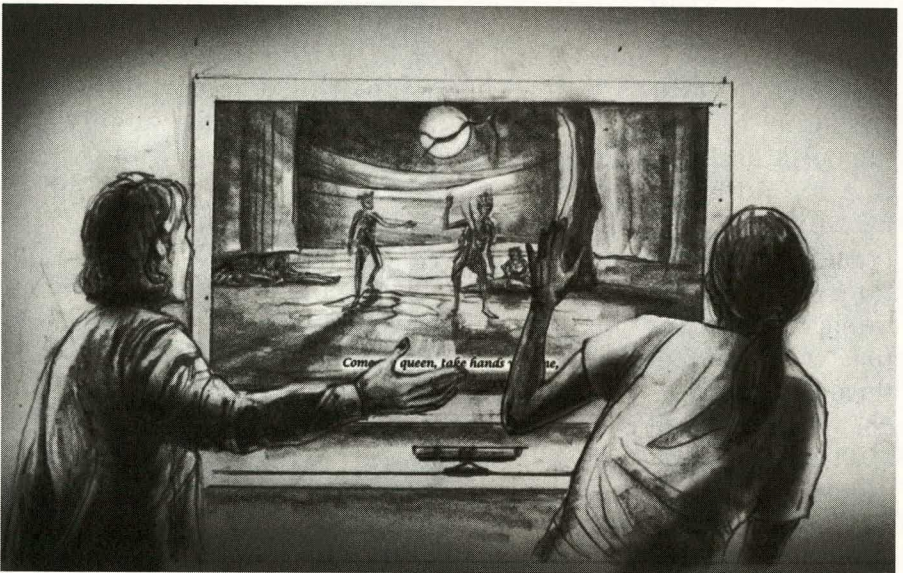


Image 2: Storyboard for *Play the Knave* (UC Davis ModLab), showing users performing a scene from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Drawing by David Nessl. © UC Davis ModLab.

texts, to stage any scene from any Shakespeare play or splice together scenes to produce a digital production of an entire play.

Play the Knave is inspired by an activity long popular among Shakespeare teachers: having groups of students perform scenes from a Shakespeare play in order to study its language, themes, plots, and characters.¹² Scene performance activities offer a practice-based research method through which students discover variations in the way a play can be interpreted. Students consider the many variables that go into a production (such as setting, costume, line delivery, and casting), and this process of working out how to represent a scene through theatrical performance prompts students to debate the meaning of the scene as well as the larger drama of which it is a part. *Play the Knave's* game format replicates and arguably improves on this staple of Shakespeare pedagogy. In addition to exporting these methods of teaching Shakespeare outside the classroom context, the game's algorithmic setup systemizes the components of performance. This has several positive ramifications for users within and outside classrooms. One, it helps users become and remain conscious of the relationship between interpretation and each of their production decisions. Two, some of the work of interpretation is off-loaded to the system, making it easier for novice users to utilize performance for literary analysis. Three, the game encourages experimentation and more extensive practice-based research because changes to setting, costume, lighting, and theatrical architecture are so easy to accomplish. With a few clicks, users can adjust what appears on screen, offering them the chance to play around with scenes and their possible meanings.

As the game provides players an experience perhaps not identical to but closely akin to that of producing ambient theater, it helps build not only players' understandings of particular scenes in Shakespearean drama, but their overall competencies in theatergoing. Whereas other theater-making games I've discussed offer the player the chance to inhabit one or maybe two theater roles (director, dramatist, actor, designer, audience member), players of *Play the Knave* embody all of these roles, becoming familiar with every aspect of the theater-making process. And even if the choices of theater space, actors, set design etc. are somewhat constrained by the game's assets (i.e., at present, there are only so many set designs possible), players become acutely aware that every aspect of what appears on a stage is the result of a choice that someone has made. What is more, as players use gesture and vocalization to animate

their on-screen avatars, they experience what it feels like to perform live, like the actors they would see in a physical theater. And because users control whether their scene performance is made public (not the case in classroom ambient scene performances), the risks of this kind of experiential learning are low, while the benefits are as high as they have always been. *Play the Knave* familiarizes players with the complex process of producing theater, enabling them to feel the action of theater making. Beyond the pleasures of game play itself, the game primes users for fuller and deeper immersion as audiences to ambient live theater, Shakespearean or any other.

There is something else at stake when gamers enact and publicize Shakespeare scenes in *Play the Knave*. As players simulate theater making, they become creators of the Shakespearean “work.”¹³ When users of *Play the Knave* perform a scene from, say, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, that scene exists within the particular game session but also, and particularly as the scene is shared with wider audiences, becomes part of the dramatic “work” that is *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. If, as M. J. Kidnie has argued, Shakespeare’s works are not static objects but become defined through the process of adaptation and especially through debates about whether a particular text or production is faithful as an adaptation, then a game like *Play the Knave*, as it facilitates the work of adaptation on a broad scale, becomes part of the process through which Shakespearean drama is understood and recognized. *Play the Knave* thus might usefully be categorized as “work” under the definition proposed by Ian Bogost, whose *How to Do Things with Videogames* calls our attention to the “performative mechanics” of certain games where players’ actions performed in-game not only “take on a meaning in the game, but they also literally do something in the world beyond the game and its players.”¹⁴ Indeed, *Play the Knave* blurs Bogost’s distinction between games as art and games as work, for through players’ engagement in the labor of theatrical performance, they end up producing theatrical art. A session of *Play the Knave* constitutes, simultaneously, work and art.

Whether *Play the Knave* will be a success in commercial gaming or among educators and theater advocates is still an open question—at the time of this essay’s publication, the game is still under development—but even in only its conceptual and prototyped state, it offers a helpful way to theorize the relationship

between gaming and theatrical production, enterprises with overlapping skill sets. Indeed, as I have argued elsewhere, theater and gaming are historically and theoretically enmeshed practices, although many scholars in theater history, game studies, and performance studies have set them in hierarchical relationship to each other, one serving the other.¹⁵ On the one hand, theater scholars and practitioners have studied the ludic nature of theatrical performance, exploring how theater can be and historically has been infused with and influenced by games.¹⁶ Among the many contemporary instances of game-based theater are site-specific performances or immersive theater, such as Punchdrunk's highly successful production *Sleep No More*, which is essentially a gaming of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. On the other hand, scholars in game studies and game designers have explored how dramaturgy and theatrical models structure gaming. For instance, Brenda Laurel has argued that Aristotelean theories of theater can productively inform the design of human-computer interfaces, and a number of scholars and practitioners have used dramatic character analysis as a method for creating more interesting avatars.¹⁷ Computer scientist Michael Neff has persuasively argued that we can create more robust and convincing expressive characters in virtual worlds by applying the insights of theater practitioners and theorists.¹⁸

In each of these cases, scholars leverage one discipline/practice against the other. In the first case (theater) gaming is used to understand or produce theater; theater subsumes the game, and the resulting product or theory is considered as or in terms of theater. In the second case (gaming), theater provides models or tools for understanding how games work or for producing better games; in this case, gaming subsumes theater. *Play the Knave* emerges out of and constitutes a more reciprocal relationship between gaming and theater, underscoring the transferability of skills between these presumably different engagements. Theater inspires the game's design, but gaming technology makes it possible to create the game in the first place. Moreover, as I have maintained, a session of *Play the Knave* is simultaneously both game play and theatrical work. In Shakespeare's era, the relationship between theater and gaming was reciprocal and mutually reinforcing in just this way, though in the hundreds of years since, we seem to have forgotten that. Perhaps new technologies of gaming that are grounded in and teach theatrical enskillment allow us to catch up with the past.

Notes

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1. Michael Best, "Electronic Shakespeare: Which Way Goes the Game?" *The Shakespeare Newsletter* Spring/ Summer (2008): 29, 37.

2. In the substantial and ever-growing field of scholarship on Shakespeare adaptations, there has been virtually no attention to gaming, digital or otherwise. Exceptions, which focus on digital games and film, are Peter S. Donaldson, "Game Space/ Tragic Space: Julie Taymor's *Titus*," in *A Companion to Shakespeare and Performance*, ed. Barbara Hodgdon and W. B. Worthen (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), 457–77; Laurie Osborne, "iShakespeare: Digital Art/Games, Intermediality, and the Future of Shakespearean Film," *Shakespeare Studies* 38 (2010): 48–57. Gaming is also addressed in Katherine Rowe, "Crowd-Sourcing Shakespeare: Screen Work and Screen Play in Second Life," *Shakespeare Studies* 38 (2010): 58–67. The most targeted treatment of Shakespeare video games is Geoffrey Way and Ayanna Thompson, "Shakespeare + 1up: Theorizing Video Games as Adaptation," in *Shakespearean Spinoffs and Citations on Stage and Screen*, ed. Amy Scott-Douglass, Courtney Lehmann, and Marguerite Rippey (forthcoming). My thanks to Way and Thompson for sharing their work in progress.

3. For Stratford's games, visit <<http://www.stratfordfestival.ca/watch/gamesandactivities.aspx?id=71>>. For access to all the games mentioned below from Shakespeare's Globe Web site, visit <<http://www.shakespearesglobe.com/playground/play>>; I am grateful to Geoffrey Way for alerting me to the Globe's games. If links to these and other games listed below no longer work, the games can usually be found through a browser search.

4. For instance, see the simple collect and run, free online game *Romeo Wherefore Art Thou*, <http://www.agame.com/game/romeo-wherefore-art-thou>; Alawar Entertainment's hidden object puzzle game *Hamlet* (2012), <http://www.alawar.com/game/hamlet/>; and Graham Nelson's interactive fiction game, *The Tempest* (1997). Examples abound in board and card games as well, including John A. Anderson's *King Hamlet* (Gameevenings, 1978), where players race around the board, partaking in "duels" and other such adventures as they collect letters that spell out "Hamlet"; Michael Eskue's nano-game *Council of Verona* (Crash Games, 2013); more sophisticated and engaged with Shakespeare dramatic plots is Mike Young's *Hamlet: A Game in Five Acts* (The Game Crafter, 2002); see also Thomas Vande Ginste and Wolf Plancke's *Kill Shakespeare* (IDW Games and Pandasaurus, 2014), an intermedial spinoff of the comic book series by the same name.

5. Examples include early board and card games such as *The Shakespeare Game* (1900) and *Memory Shakespearean Version* (1959); and more recent ones, such as *Playing Shakespeare* (1990); *Hamlet: An Epic Board Game in the Rooms*

of *Elsinore* (not commercial); *After Dinner Shakespeare* (1996); *Shakespeare Carduta* (2007); *Council of Verona* (2013). Digital games structured around or focused on trivia include Veronaville in *The Sims 2*; the Shakespeare level of *Carmen San Diego's Great Chase Through Time*; *Spear: The Literacy Arcade Game*, <http://www.canadianshakespeares.ca/speare.cfm>; and several games on London's Globe Theatre Web site such as *Dekker's Dash*, *Find the Lost Words*, and *Become a Lute Hero*.

6. Ian Bogost, *How to Do Things with Videogames* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011).

7. <http://www.pbs.org/shakespeare/game/>

8. This topic has been studied extensively in relation to video games especially. See, for example, James Paul Gee, *Good Video Games + Good Learning: Collected Essays on Video Games, Learning, and Literacy* (New York: Peter Lang, 2007); Constance Steinkuehler, Kurt Squire, and Sasha Barab, eds., *Games, Learning, and Society: Learning and Meaning in the Digital Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

9. For an interesting discussion of how Shakespeare is adapted in performing object toy theater, see "'Great Reckonings in Little Rooms,' or Children's Playtime; Shakespeare and Performing Object Theatre of Toys," in *Shakespeare and Youth Culture*, eds. Jennifer Hulbert, Kevin J. Wetmore, Jr., and Robert L. York (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 43–56.

10. The game can be downloaded here: http://daniprose.files.wordpress.com/2011/07/revenge-of-the-groundlings_final.pdf To read about and download other Shakespeare games that were finalists for 2011 Game Chef competition, visit <http://gamechef.wordpress.com/2011-finals/>.

11. Stephen O'Neil, *Shakespeare and YouTube: New Media Forms of the Bard* (London: Bloomsbury Arden Shakespeare, 2014); Christy Desmet, "Paying Attention in Shakespeare Parody: From Tom Stoppard to YouTube," *Shakespeare Survey* 61 (2008): 227–38; Barbara Hodgdon, "(You)Tube Travel: The 9:59 to Dover Beach, Stopping at Fair Verona and Elsinor," *Shakespeare Bulletin* 28, no. 3 (2010): 313–30; Christy Desmet, "Teaching Shakespeare with YouTube," *English Journal* 99.1 (2009): 65–70; Lauren Shohet, "YouTube, Use, and the Idea of the Archive," *Shakespeare Studies* 38 (2010): 68–76.

12. See many of the essays in Milla Cozart Riggio, ed., *Teaching Shakespeare Through Performance* (New York: Modern Languages Association, 1999).

13. M. J. Kidnie convincingly recuperates the term "work" as a way to get around the problematic assumption that performances are derivative interpretations of a somehow more static and recognizable "text." Margaret Jane Kidnie, *Shakespeare and the Problem of Adaptation* (London: Routledge, 2009).

14. Bogost, *How to Do Things with Videogames*, 119. For instance, in a mixed-reality game called *World Without Oil* (created by Ken Eklund and Jane McGonigal), players imagine how they would cope with life during an oil shortage. As part of the game, some players "literally enacted oil-saving strategies like planning community gardens or starting carpools" (121), thereby having an impact on their environment through the work of gameplay.

15. Gina Bloom, "Games," in *Early Modern Theatricality*, ed. Henry S. Turner, Oxford Twenty-First Century Approaches to Literature (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 189–211.

16. The game-like nature of medieval and early modern drama has been

explored by a range of scholars. On medieval drama, see Glending Olson, "Plays as Play: A Medieval Ethical Theory of Performance and the Intellectual Context of the *Tretise of Miraclis Pleyinge*," *Viator: Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 26 (1995): 195–221; V. A. Kolve, *The Play Called Corpus Christi* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1966), esp. chapter 2; Lawrence M. Clopper, *Drama, Play, and Game: English Festive Culture in the Medieval and Early Modern Period* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001). Tom Bishop, "The Art of Playing," in *Medieval Shakespeare: Pasts and Presents*, ed. Ruth Morse, Helen Cooper, and Peter Holland (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 159–76 discusses the influence of medieval confluences of games and theater on Shakespeare. On how the game of bearbaiting influenced early modern drama, see Andrew Gurr, "Bears and Players: Philip Henslowe's Double Acts," *Shakespeare Bulletin* 22, no. 4 (2004): 31–42; Jason Scott-Warren, "When Theaters Were Bear-Gardens; or, What's at Stake in the Comedy of Humors," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 54, no. 1 (2003): 63–82; John R. Ford, "Changeable Taffeta: Re-dressing the Bears in *Twelfth Night*," in *Inside Shakespeare: Essays on the Blackfriars Stage*, ed. Paul Menzer (Selinsgrove, PA: Susquehanna University Press, 2006), 174–91. The most extensive discussions of games in theater are by scholars studying early modern festive culture. Foundational work includes C. L. Barber, *Shakespeare's Festive Comedies* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1959); Robert Weimann, *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition in the Theater: Studies in the Social Dimension of Dramatic Form and Function* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987); François Laroque, *Shakespeare's Festive World: Elizabethan Seasonal Entertainment and the Professional Stage*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Naomi Conn Liebler, *Shakespeare's Festive Tragedy: The Ritual Foundations of Genre* (New York: Routledge, 1995). Important recent work in the field includes Erika T. Lin, "Popular Festivity and the Early Modern Stage: The Case of *George a Greene*," *Theatre Journal* 61 (2009): 271–97; Erika T. Lin, "Festivity," in *Early Modern Theatricality*, ed. Henry S. Turner, Oxford Twenty-First Century Approaches to Literature (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 212–29. There has also been a good deal of work on play, more broadly conceived, in relation to drama. E.g., Louis A. Montrose, "'Sport by Sport O'erthrown': *Love's Labour's Lost* and the Politics of Play," *Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 18, no. 4 (1977): 528–52; Marianne L. Novy, "Patriarchy and Play in *The Taming of the Shrew*," *English Literary Renaissance* 9, no. 2 (1979): 264–80; Tom Bishop, "Shakespeare's Theater Games," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 40, no. 1 (2010): 65–88. On sport in relation to drama, see Cynthia Marshall, "Wrestling as Play and Game in *As You Like It*," *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900* 33, no. 2 (1993): 265–87; Jennifer A. Low, *Manhood and the Duel: Masculinity in Early Modern Drama and Culture* (New York: Palgrave, 2003); Edward Berry, *Shakespeare and the Hunt: A Cultural and Social Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Gregory M. Colón Semenza, *Sport, Politics, and Literature in the English Renaissance* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2003). And on gambling and drama, see Linda Woodbridge, "'He Beats Thee 'gainst the Odds': Gambling, Risk Management, and *Antony and Cleopatra*," in *Antony and Cleopatra: New Critical Essays*, ed. Sara Munson Deats (New York: Routledge, 2004), 193–211; Donald Hedrick, "Real Entertainment: Sportification, Coercion, and Carceral Theater," in *Thunder at a Playhouse: Essaying Shake-*

speare and the Early Modern Stage, ed. Peter Kanelos and Matt Kozusko (Selinsgrove, PA: Susquehanna University Press, 2010), 50–66.

17. Brenda Laurel, *Computers as Theatre* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Pub., 1993). Other key work on theater as a productive analogy for game design includes Janet H. Murray, *Hamlet on the Holodeck: The Future of Narrative in Cyberspace* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997); Gonzalo Frasca, "Videogames of the Oppressed," *Electronic Book Review* 24 June 2004 (<http://www.electronicbookreview.com/thread/firstperson/Boalian>). For a brief overview of this approach, see Ragnhild Tronstad, "Appendix: Theater and Performance Studies," in *The Video Game Theory Reader 2*, ed. Bernard Perron and Mark J. P. Wolf (New York: Routledge, 2009), 386–88.

18. Michael Neff, "Lessons from the Arts: What the Performing Arts Literature Can Teach Us About Creating Expressive Character Movement," in *Nonverbal Communication in Virtual Worlds: Understanding and Designing Expressive Characters*, eds. Joshua Tanenbaum, Magy Seif El-Nasr, and Michael Nixon (Pittsburgh: ETC Press, 2014), 123–48.

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